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Tuesday, February 19, 2019 metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly

YOUTH MOVEMENT

Ranking the best young athletes along Philadelphia's sports landscape. 22-23

VSiN
metro BET
Lightning vs. Flyers betting preview. 20-21

BLACK HERSTORY MONTH

Journalist Sofiya Ballin's essay series "Black History Untold" shares the not-so-well-known stories of black women. 6-7

TAYLOR BALDWIN IMAGE

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5 THINGS TO KN

WELCOME TO METRO PHILLY

MICHAEL BUTLER, REPORTER

Sofiya Ballin's work as a journalist has won her awards, but amplifying black voices is her goal and one of the key ideas behind "Black History Untold," her annual series of essays highlighting black experiences in history. I talked to Sofiya about the purpose behind "Black History Untold" and what sets this fourth edition apart from the others. The depth of "Black History Untold" represents the many layers of the black experience and is a huge reminder that we should celebrate black history all year and not just in February.

Presidents' Day protests decry emergency declaration

1 Activists in Washington, Chicago and dozens of other U.S. cities protested on Monday's Presidents' Day holiday against President Donald Trump's declaration of a national emergency to secure funding for a U.S.-Mexico border wall. Calling Trump's declaration an abuse of power and usurpation of Congress, organizers with the nonprofit advocacy group MoveOn.org and other participants said it was important to let the outrage over the move be heard. "We disagree with the state of emergency declared by the president and stand with our immigrant colleagues and friends," said Darcy Regan, executive director of Indivisible Chicago, which co-hosted the protest there. Trump invoked the emergency powers on Friday after Congress declined to fulfill his request for $5.7 billion to help build the wall that was his signature 2016 campaign promise.

Weinstein sex assault trial pushed back to June 3

2 Harvey Weinstein's trial on criminal sexual assault charges has been pushed back a month and is now slated to begin June 3, according to the New York Post. Prosecutors accuse Weinstein, 66, of forcibly performing oral sex on a woman in 2006 and raping another woman in 2013. Judge James Burke and prosecutors agreed to a new trial date in Manhattan Supreme Court after attorneys for the disgraced producer requested additional time. Weinstein was in court in January with his new legal team, Jose Baez, Ronald Sullivan and Duncan Levin, though two of his new lawyers represented one of the disgraced Hollywood mogul's most vocal accusers, actress Rose McGowan. They replaced Ben Brafman, a criminal defense lawyer with clients including Michael Jackson, rapper Sean "Diddy" Combs and "pharma bro" Martin Shkreli, who withdrew from the case. TERRY MOSELEY

PRESIDENTS' DAY AT MT. VERNON

3 Members of the U.S. Army's Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps take part in Presidents' Day events at George Washington's Mount Vernon estate in Virginia on Monday. Mount Vernon was the plantation of the first U.S. president.

Queen to rock Oscars with live performance

4 British rock band Queen will perform live at Sunday's Oscars ceremony, organizers said on Monday, following the blockbuster success of Best Picture nominee "Bohemian Rhapsody." "Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy? We welcome @QueenWillRock and @adamlambert to this year's Oscars!" the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences announced on its official Twitter feed. The band, whose late frontman Freddie Mercury is the subject of "Bohemian Rhapsody," is now made up of original members Brian May and Roger Taylor with former "American Idol" star Adam Lambert taking on vocals. "Bohemian Rhapsody" has five Academy Award nominations, including a Best Actor nod for Rami Malek, who takes on the role of Mercury in the film. Mercury died of AIDS in London in 1991 at the age of 45.

Heavyweight boxer Fury signs ESPN broadcast deal

5 British heavyweight Tyson Fury has signed a broadcast deal under which his fights will be shown exclusively on ESPN platforms in the United States. No financial details were disclosed, but British newspaper the Daily Mail reported on Monday that the deal was worth 80 million pounds ($103 million), while the BBC reported that it covered Fury's next five fights. Fury and promoter Frank Warren signed the deal with Bob Arum's Top Rank Promotions, which has a multiyear contract with ESPN, and the agreement calls for Fury to fight a minimum of two bouts per year in the United States. British broadcaster BT Sport will continue to hold the rights for Fury's fights in the U.K. "I'm delighted," Fury said. "With ESPN and BT Sport behind me, the biggest sports platforms in the world are now linked up with the best heavyweight in the world."

Jefferson Health rings in Heart Health Day at King of Prussia mall

Jefferson Health.

ASK JEFFERSON HEALTH:

February is National Heart Awareness Month, and Jefferson Health is kicking off Heart Health Day with a bang this Saturday, February 23. The event, hosted at Nordstrom Court at the King of Prussia mall from 11:00 a.m. to 1 p.m., will showcase the Philadelphia Eagles cheerleaders, fun giveaways, free blood pressure screenings, risk assessments and more. Metro caught up with Dr. David M. Shipon, Director of Preventive Cardiology and Cardiovascular Rehab for Jefferson Health, to unpack the details.

How prevalent is heart disease?

It's still the number one killer in our society. As we get older, women's risk of heart disease tends to exceed men's risk, especially after the age of 70. The key to prevention is instilling awareness and bringing programs to the community to inform them as to what heart disease is. It's also about understanding the warning signs and your exact risk of heart disease. From there, we implement the right medical or lifestyle modification programs to hopefully reduce that risk.

What are the most common risk factors?

For most people, as we get older, we're looking at your family history and your personal risk factors—whether or not you're a smoker, are obese, or have diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or stress. We look at all these things to better understand your risk. Then we layer onto it, gathering blood work, measuring cholesterol and so on to further fine tune your exact risk of heart attack or stroke going forward. Then we design an individualized program from there.

Any heart healthy habits you recommend?

The key to prevention is what we do for ourselves. The most important factors are:

- **Mindset:** Stress and anxiety tend to lead to bad habits, like splurging on unhealthy food that raises cholesterol. The right mindset helps you make healthy choices. It also helps you be aware of when you're stressed. Yoga and meditation are powerful tools, and Jefferson offers a wonderful mindfulness meditation program.
- **Nutrition:** Adopting healthy eating habits can go a really long way in preventing heart disease. A standard heart healthy diet tends to be very Mediterranean—lots of legumes, vegetables, good oils, and healthy, lean proteins.
- **Exercise:** Something as simple as walking is all it takes. If you can gradually increase your activity so that you're eventually taking 10,000 steps per day, you'll be setting yourself up for success. You can start small and gradually increase your routine by 250 steps every two weeks. Generally speaking, the more activity you do in a day, the healthier you are.

Why is Jefferson Health hosting the Heart Health Day event on Saturday?

It's a great opportunity for the community to come out and meet our cardiologists, receive free health screenings, and enter to win some free Eagles gear! Educating the public is the first step in promoting global heart health.

Ready to take charge of your heart health?

Connect with us at JeffersonHealth.org/heart to learn more.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23

Nordstrom Court at King of Prussia Mall

11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

- Meet Philadelphia Eagles mascot SWOOP and the Eagles cheerleaders
- Sign up to win signed Philadelphia Eagles merchandise
- Free blood pressure screenings and risk assessment
- Prizes and giveaways
- And more!

JeffersonHealth.org/Heart
#JeffersonHeartDay

EPA Acting Administrator Andrew Wheeler, right, in Philly last week. GETTY IMAGES

Locals blast EPA's action plan on toxic chemicals in drinking water

Residents are angry the EPA says it needs more time before taking new action.

SAM NEWHOUSE
sam.newhouse@metro.us

Acting Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Andrew Wheeler, who is expected to be confirmed later this month, came to Philadelphia recently to announce an "action plan" regarding per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances — known as PFAS — chemicals believed to be in the drinking water of at least 16 million Americans.

Wheeler announced that the EPA is moving forward toward regulating PFAS as hazardous substances and setting a maximum contaminant level (MCL) under the Safe Drinking Water Act — for the first time since 1996, he said — in one of its biggest projects ever.

But residents of Philly-area suburbs where PFAS have been found in the drinking water — and where dozens of residents have shared stories of rampant illness and cancer in themselves and their family members from past decades — were less than impressed, to say the least.

"It literally meant nothing to me, it meant nothing to our community," said Hope Grosse, of the Buxmont Coalition for Safer Water (representing residents on the Bucks–Montgomery county border). "We did think they were going to deem PFAS hazardous waste, which they didn't do. We know that doesn't take nine months, it doesn't take three months, they could do that today. But until we get it deemed toxic, we can't even get it off the market."

Grosse grew up across the street from the Naval Air Development Center (NADC) in Warminster, identified as a source of PFAS contamination in the local watershed, via firefighting foam used weekly for decades in firefighting exercises on the base. Her father died of brain cancer at 50, and she was diagnosed with Stage 4 melanoma at 25, which is now in remission.

PFAS, which include related chemicals like PFOA and GenX, are used in the creation of many products including Teflon, Gore-Tex, food packaging, cleaning products and firefighting foams. Associated with military bases in Pennsylvania, Michigan and West Virginia where firefighting foam has been used, they have been found in the watersheds in states including Minnesota, North Carolina, New Hampshire and New Jersey. The toxic compounds are also linked to locations of manufacturers like Saint-Gobain, Chemours, 3M and DuPont.

Under existing EPA standards, PFAS would be deemed "hazardous" after longtime exposure in drinking water if they rose above the level of 70 parts per trillion (PPT). Water tests in Warrington Township in 2014-15 found PFAS at a level of 1,600 PPT.

Wheeler's announcement comes after the EPA was blasted in the media for "not limiting" PFAS in watersheds, months after former EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt promised to take action on the chemical. Some said Wheeler's announcement is just a repeat of what Pruitt previously promised.

"It was all talk and no action," said environmental attorney Mark Cuker, himself a resident of Upper Dublin Township, where PFAS have been found at levels of 50 PPT in the watershed. "People are still drinking this stuff."

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Hemp Gummies Shown To Relieve Discomfort

Hemp Gummies offer users fast acting relief from joint and muscle discomfort that's absolutely delicious; now available in the U.S. without a prescription

Chris Laufstein
Associated Health Press

BOSTON — For millions battling daily discomfort, this news couldn't be more exciting.

A new relief extract found in hemp is available across the nation and can be purchased without a prescription.

And the best part, it comes to users in the form of a tasty gummy bear.

So you can say goodbye to pills, needles, and creams!

Hemp Gummies, contains pure concentrated doses of hemp extract, which can help relieve joint discomfort along with general muscle aches and soreness.

It also calms, relaxes, and eases tension all over the body.

Exciting new scientific research shows that hemp extract contains special relief molecules called cannabinoids which bind to receptor cites in the brain and body. When taken orally, hemp extract activates these receptors, and soothing comfort begins to take form.

Available Across the Nation

Recent developments, like the *US Farm Bill*, allow ***Hemp Gummies*** to be sold in the U.S. without a prescription. And since it can't get you high it's flying off the shelves.

"Most people have no idea that pure hemp extract, like ***Hemp Gummies***, can be purchased. And that's because it contains no THC," explains Dr. Joe Wezensky, who sits on the scientific board at Medici Quest.

"Instead, it's bursting with special relief compounds called cannabinoids. These cannabinoids target special receptor cites all over the body but are most prominent in the brain."

"This system of cannabinoids and the receptors that they bind to are called the Endocannabinoid System and science is just now unlocking its amazing medical potential"

"In fact, the initial research has been so impressive that hemp extract is now patented by the US Government (patent #6,630,507)."

"It's also being used by athletes in the NFL, MMA among other physically demanding sports as a safe alternative."

Clearing Up the Confusion Around Hemp

One of the biggest mistakes people make when talking about hemp extract is mixing it up with marijuana.

Although the two fall under the same plant category, cannabis sativa, they have completely different effects on the body.

Remarkably, hemp extract is available in the U.S. and can't get you high (ever!). That's because there is no THC in it, the chemical that makes you feel "buzzed".

"Although you can't get high from ***Hemp Gummies***, you can start feeling the effective relief," explains Wezensky.

"Most people have very low cannabinoid levels, which is why they constantly ache. ***Hemp Gummies*** boosts cannabinoid levels extremely fast, helping relieve lingering joint discomfort ...muscle tension... and general soreness. It also eases stress and elicits amazing relaxation without feeling impaired. And what most people really love is they're delicious and so easy to take on the go.

How it Works

Clinical studies show that cannabinoids and the receptors that they bind to are found all over your body.

However, they are most concentrated in your brain. That's why it has such a profound impact on how you feel, especially your level of comfort.

These cannabinoids and their receptors work like "lock and key" and bind to each other triggering important biological processes.

Hemp Extract, like *Hemp Gummies*, may help users with...

- Aching joints
- Sore muscles
- Cramping
- Leg and foot discomfort
- Restlessness
- Stress
- Sleep problems

Keeps Your Body Balanced...

The incredible impact cannabinoids have on your health is directly related to the primary goal of your Endocannabinoid System, which is to maintain a balance in the body, a physiological state known as homeostasis.

Research shows that maintaining this balance is a key to vitality and healthy bodily function.

The cannabinoids found in ***Hemp Gummies***, hemp extract, replenish your levels quickly, easing discomfort over the entire body.

Plus, by keeping your body in balance (homeostasis), ***Hemp Gummies*** also helps to relieve stress and tension...improve sleep... and even promote relaxation and calmness.

Not Yet Sold in Stores

Hemp extract that is derived from industrial hemp, like ***Hemp Gummies***, is available nationwide.

A GUMMY A DAY TO KEEP ALL YOUR ACHES AWAY: *Hemp Gummies a 5 milligram dose of Hemp Extract that works all day to keep you comfortable.*

However, several major pharmaceutical companies are currently testing hemp extract in clinical settings, which means it may require a prescription in the future. It's advised to get ***Hemp Gummies*** while you can.

Taking All the Risk Off Consumers

A large percentage of men and women using ***Hemp Gummies*** experience truly amazing results. That's why it's now being sold with a guarantee that goes way beyond the industry standard.

"We can only make this guarantee because we are 100% certain our customers will be satisfied," says Wezensky. We want to take full risk off consumers. So in addition to offering substantial discounts for first time customers, we also make them a huge promise that ensures they don't have to risk a cent."

Here's how it works: Take ***Hemp Gummies*** exactly as directed and you must be thrilled with the results! Otherwise, simply return the empty bottles within 90 days. Then, the company will refund your money plus give you an extra $10 for having tried the product.

Where To Find Hemp Gummies

This is the official nationwide release of ***Hemp Gummies*** hemp extract in Pennsylvania. And so, the company is offering a special discount supply to anyone who calls within the next 48 hours.

An Order Hotline has been set up for local readers to call. This gives everyone an equal chance to try ***Hemp Gummies*** hemp extract.

Starting at 7.00AM today, the discount offer will be available for 48 hours. All you have to do is call TOLL FREE at 1-800-413-7576. The company will do the rest.

Important: Due to hemp extracts growing popularity and recent media exposure, phone lines are often busy. If you call and do not immediately get through, please be patient and call back.

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Sofiya Ballin. ALL IMAGES BY TAYLOR BALDWIN

'Black History Untold' shines light on women of color

Journalist Sofiya Ballin's identity series spotlights previously unknown stories of black women in history.

MICHAEL BUTLER
letters@metro.us

"I always say that I don't give people a voice. I don't like the idea that I'm giving people a voice; I don't do that. I put the microphone and recorder in place. My job is to elevate [voices]. The voices have always been here. You just haven't been listening."

Those words from journalist and storyteller Sofiya Ballin concisely describe the purpose of the fourth edition of her annual "Black History Untold" essay series. "Black History Untold" is an online series of essays and stories that discuss stories about the black experience that most people don't know about. This year's edition highlights the untold stories of black women. To commemorate this year's "Black History Untold," Ballin will discuss her work at a Black History Month-themed History After Hours event at the Museum of the American Revolution on Tuesday.

Ballin recognizes the importance of being able to share black stories in a museum centered around the American Revolution, a historic event that has not always included people of diverse backgrounds in its narratives.

"There's a sense of revolution and power in having us in spaces that never seemed to want us there, knowing that in many ways we built this country," Ballin said.

She added: "Speaking at the Museum of the American Revolution is huge to me because I understand that when we speak about patriotism, whether white America realizes or not, that portrait has never fully included everyone. When I talk about the American portrait, I'm talking about indigenous people, Latin people, Asian people — [they] aren't included in that portrait that we see in the back of our minds. Even though we are so woven into that history, we're not included. So to speak at this museum, I'm aware of the weight, responsibility and honor of that in sharing these untold black stories. I want people to leave knowing that we too are part of America."

"We talk about black history and how much we don't know and how much of that knowledge has been suppressed, but specifically with black women it has been more suppressed."

Sofiya Ballin

What also makes "Black History Untold" this year is Ballin's partnership with the National Basketball Association's Brooklyn Nets. "Early on that was an opportunity that came out of nowhere but was and is a blessing. It was a massive learning experience and they brought me on to produce 10 profiles of black figures, specifically in New York and mostly Brooklyn, to share their stories of historical black figures that impacted them."

Ballin wanted to make each essay in the project a love letter to black women, a group that is not commonly thought of in a nuanced manner. "We talk about black history and how much we don't know and how much of that knowledge has been suppressed, but specifically with black women it has been more suppressed," Ballin said.

"Some of the topics that really struck me were women in the project discussing who impacted them and who they are. Someone said, 'I want to focus on black women who are also victims of mass incarceration.' That's something we don't talk about a lot because we often talk about black men," Ballin added. "I have a black woman preacher talking about sex positivity and why that's important for her to preach to black women, because sex has become taboo in the church. There's a [transgender] black woman talking about how even post-slavery, black trans people fought to proclaim their identities proudly. There's so much to learn and I'm so excited to talk about it."

Sofiya Ballin is speaking at the Museum of the American Revolution's History After Hours event Tuesday from 6-7 p.m. History After Hours is from 5-8 p.m. and admission is $10, with full museum access included. Check out "Black History Untold" at blkhistoryuntold.com.

Winter storm expected to bring snow on Wednesday

A highly erratic winter will bring snow as well as relatively warm weather in the same week.

MICHAEL BUTLER
letters@metro.us

COURTESY OF OFFICE OF THE PHILADELPHIA CITY REPRESENTATIVE/@ PHILLYCITYREP

Philly weather has recently been the source of both good news and bad news for area residents.

The good news is that Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow earlier this month and predicted an early spring.

The bad news is that we're going to get heavy winter weather until then, and this week looks to be no different.

Following a sunny Presidents' Day, Tuesday looks to be sunny with a high near 38 degrees. Tuesday night into Wednesday morning brings a slight chance of snow after 4 a.m., though, setting the stage for a cold Wednesday.

Groundhog Day has come and gone and while we're still getting snow, we will soon be able to count the remaining cold winter days that we have left.

In the meantime, bundle up, stay warm and try not to be outside too long. Jack Frost still has unfinished business to settle, as there is a 90 percent chance of precipitation on Wednesday. Snow is expected during the day before 5 p.m., with a combination of rain, sleet and snow expected in the evening.

With the accumulation of snow during the day on Wednesday, late starts are expected for local schools, with a chance of school closures if the snowy onslaught ends up being too much to handle.

Things take a warm turn for the better on Thursday, with a slight chance of rain before 1 p.m. and a high of almost 54 degrees.

The weekend brings warmer weather just in time. Friday is forecast to be partly sunny with a high temperature near 47 degrees.

Showers are expected this weekend with a 60 percent chance of precipitation on Saturday and Sunday. Sunday has an expected temperature of 52 degrees and should end the week on a slightly warmer note.

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FAA investigates Southwest over baggage weight discrepancies

GETTY IMAGES

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration is investigating Southwest Airlines Co. for widespread failure to accurately track the combined weight of checked bags loaded onto its jets, according to a Wall Street Journal report on Monday.

The U.S. aviation safety agency's yearlong civil probe found systemic and significant mistakes with employee calculations and luggage-loading practices, resulting in potential discrepancies when pilots compute takeoff weights, the Journal said, citing government officials and internal agency documents

The FAA has not decided whether to impose fines or any other punishment, the report cited people familiar with the investigation as saying.

The inaccuracies ranged from a few dozen pounds to more than 1,000 pounds in excess of what the paperwork indicated, sparking disputes between the company and some agency inspectors about potential safety consequences, the report said.

A company spokesman said there is an open Letter of Investigation (LOI) which is a common mechanism for the FAA to document and share safety interests or concerns with an airline.

The airline has not been issued fines and faces no enforcement action regarding its weight and balance program, Southwest spokesman Brandy King said.

"In this case, the LOI addresses an issue that Southwest voluntarily reported to the FAA last year and since that time, Southwest has implemented controls to address weight and balance program concerns, and shared those measures with the FAA," King said.

The FAA could not be immediately reached for comment. REUTERS

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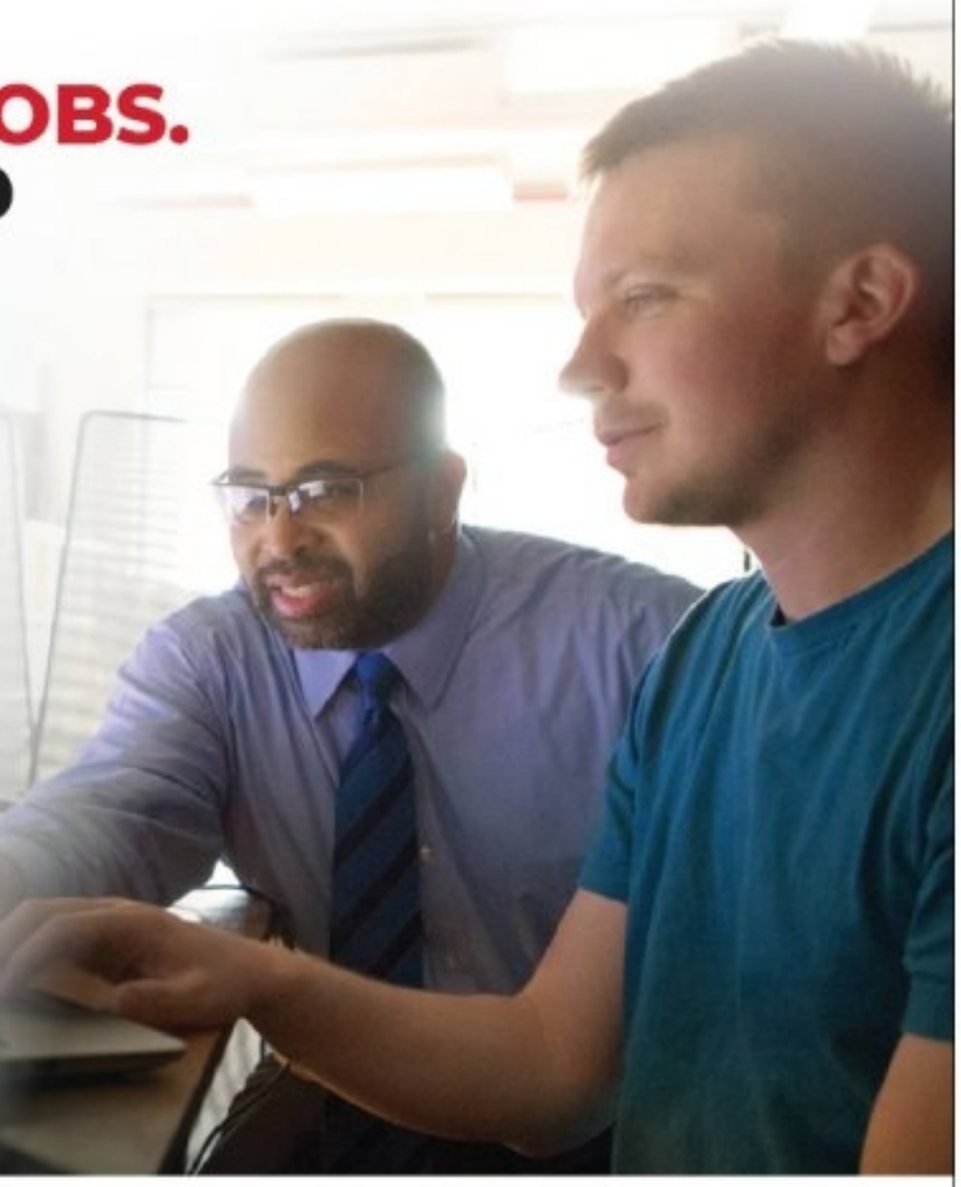

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*Source: "Cybersecurity Market Report," Cybersecurity Ventures, May 31, 2017.

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Chicago police seek follow-up interview with 'Empire' actor Jussie Smollett

Smollett reported he had been attacked by two men yelling racial and homophobic slurs.

Chicago police have shifted the direction of their investigation into actor Jussie Smollett's report of a hate-crime assault and are seeking to interview him again, after releasing two men detained for questioning in the probe, a police spokesman said on Saturday.

Smollett, 36, an openly gay African-American performer who plays a gay character on the musical hip-hop TV drama "Empire," ignited a furor on social media last month when he reported he had been attacked on the street by two men yelling racial and homophobic slurs.

According to Smollett's account, his assailants struck him in the face, draped a rope around his neck and doused him with an "unknown chemical substance" before fleeing. Police said the actor took himself to a hospital but was not seriously hurt.

Last week, police said they had arrested two Nigerian brothers described as "persons of interest" who were recognized from surveillance camera footage taken in the area of the alleged Jan. 29 assault.

The pair were freed two days later without charge, police told Reuters on Friday, in light of "new evidence" from their interrogation.

Police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi denied a media report on Thursday that detectives were looking into whether Smollett had staged the attack, saying then that there was "no evidence to say this is a hoax."

On Saturday, Guglielmi issued a brief statement saying that "information received from the individuals questioned by police earlier in the 'Empire' case has in fact shifted the trajectory of the investigation." He added, "We've reached out to the 'Empire' cast member's attorney to request a follow-up interview."

Attorneys for Smollett said in a statement late on Saturday that he was "angered and devastated" by recent reports that the alleged attackers were people he is familiar with, including a personal trainer he hired to prepare him for a music video.

"He has now been further victimized by claims attributed to these alleged perpetrators that Jussie played a role in his own attack. Nothing is further from the truth and anyone claiming otherwise is lying," said the lawyers, Todd Pugh and Jonathan Brayman.

Smollett and his attorneys anticipate being further updated by the Chicago Police Department on the status of the investigation and will continue to cooperate, they said.

Meanwhile, the New York Post reported that Smollett has also retained the services of criminal defense lawyer Michael Monico, a former Illinois federal prosecutor who is also representing President Donald Trump's former personal attorney and fixer, Michael Cohen.

Monico could not immediately be reached by Reuters for comment.

"Empire" debuted on the Fox network in 2015 and has earned multiple Emmy nominations. Smollett plays the character Jamal Lyon, a member of the family that is the focus of the show.

REUTERS

Jussie Smollett. GETTY IMAGES

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Fiascos and fumbles: Oscar organizers stumble to restore glory

GETTY IMAGES

First it was the furor over a proposed new "Popular Film" category, then it was the fiasco over planned host Kevin Hart, and last month the organizers of the Oscars were accused of intimidating celebrities not to present at rival award shows.

Last week, another storm erupted when, as part of a pledge to shorten next Sunday's Oscars ceremony, plans to present awards for cinematography, film editing, live-action shorts and makeup/hairstyling during commercial breaks were slammed as insulting by actors, directors and cinematographers. Five days later, the plan was scrapped.

"This year, the bigger question than who will win at the Oscars is what the heck is going on at the Academy?"

Tim Gray, awards editor, Variety

It's been a tough 12 months for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences as it battles to restore its annual Oscars show to a must-see event after the U.S. television audience slumped to an all-time low last year.

"This year, the bigger question than who will win at the Oscars is what the heck is going on at the Academy?" said Tim Gray, awards editor at Hollywood trade publication Variety.

"There have been a slew of bungles," Gray added. "I feel they are flailing around and acting out of desperation."

Under pressure from the ABC television network to trim and liven up the ceremony, the academy has seen many of its efforts backfire.

Bungles include a retreat in September over a proposed new "Popular Film" category, the withdrawal in December of Oscars host Kevin Hart because of past homophobic tweets, and an accusation in January by the U.S. actors union that the academy was pressuring celebrities not to appear or present at award ceremonies other than the Oscars.

The Oscars is the last in a long Hollywood season that sees award shows and celebrity-packed red carpets every week over two months.

"The Academy is caught between its role as a venerable institution that confers honors for the ages on film and the demands of the hurly-burly of social media, the 24/7 news cycle and the demands of the ratings," said Sharon Waxman, founder and editor in chief of Hollywood website The Wrap.

The Academy did not return a request for comment for this story, but said in a letter to members last week that show producers "have given great consideration to both Oscar tradition and our broad global audience."

ABC Entertainment President Karey Burke told reporters earlier this month she believed that the publicity around the Kevin Hart withdrawal showed the Oscars was still relevant.

"I, ironically, have found that the lack of clarity around the Oscars has kept the Oscars really in the conversation, and that the mystery has really been compelling," Burke said. "People really care."

The missteps have all but drowned out initial kudos over this year's diverse Oscar nominations list, which range from art-house films like "Roma" to superhero blockbuster "Black Panther" and crowd-pleasing musicals "Bohemian Rhapsody" and "A Star Is Born."

Awards watchers say the Academy's efforts to deliver a compelling show for viewers next week still risk falling flat.

"The Academy is dealing yet again with what appears to be a leading film that is a very small film, in Spanish, and in black and white, that has not been seen by that many people," Waxman said, referring to Best Picture front-runner "Roma." Recent Best Picture winners include small art-house films "The Shape of Water" last year and "Moonlight" in 2017. REUTERS

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Pat King
Grumble Editor

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DON'T BLOW YOUR NOSE IN CROWDED RESTAURANTS!!!!

Whatever happened to restaurant etiquette??? Don't people realize that it's bad manners to blow your nose while people are eating???

I was in a restaurant last week, and a gentleman kept coughing up phlegm and blowing his nose repeatedly. It was disgusting! I can see a cough here and there and a nose-dab, but you could hear the snot coming up and out! I couldn't believe it! And you know when you give a person "the stare"... it had no effect.

Please remind your readers that it's still bad manners to blow their loaded noses in a restaurant where people are eating!!!

— **Susa**, *Metro US reader*

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♈ **Aries** Resourcefulness will help you avoid being taken advantage of by someone who tends to exaggerate.

♉ **Taurus** Participate in events and activities that will encourage you to make new connections.

♊ **Gemini** An emotional situation will escalate quickly if you are suspicious of what someone is telling you.

♋ **Cancer** Set your sights and goals high. What you have to offer will bring favorable responses and unusual opportunities.

♌ **Leo** Physical activity or labor will ease tension and give you time to mull over recent events and how best to respond.

♍ **Virgo** Share your thoughts, feelings and plans with someone close to you to get a better idea of what's possible.

♎ **Libra** A settlement or contract needs to be looked over carefully. Get expert advice if necessary.

♏ **Scorpio** Don't overreact to a situation that arises between you and a loved one. Listen and offer alternatives.

♐ **Sagittarius** If you touch base with someone you enjoy being around, you'll be offered information that will help you.

♑ **Capricorn** Finish what you start. Looking back at the past will help you make crucial decisions regarding the best way to move forward.

♒ **Aquarius** Take the time to find out what others want, and offer incentives that will ensure you get your way as well.

♓ **Pisces** You will impress the people you need to get things done your way if you take action. Personal gains will improve your lifestyle.

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Jamie Bell is a brutal fighter with depth in 'Donnybrook'

The British actor hated shooting the fight scenes, though.

GREGORY WAKEMAN
Gregory.Wakeman@metro.us

"Donnybrook" is a brutal film.

Anytime Jamie Bell's Earl, a struggling veteran, and Frank Grillo's Angus, an evil drug dealer, are onscreen, violence seems inevitable. Especially when they're together, as the duo head to the titular bare-knuckle cage match where the winner takes home $100,000.

Writer and director Tim Sutton constantly jars and unsettles his audience, with savagely bloody fights, cold-blooded murders, sadistic sex scenes, all of which is set to a soundtrack of opera, heavy metal and country.

But at the same time, "Donnybrook" is surprisingly poetic, as it provides a vivid and honest look at truly desperate characters, which feels both depressingly timely and achingly realistic.

"We are making this film at a very specific moment in American history," Bell tells Metro. "Where the middle class has been marginalized and the lower classes are literally on the brink of poverty. There is a man in the White House who stands for, I don't want to say fascist things, but bordering on fascism and has intensely right-wing and conservative values. Freedom has been stripped from people.

"But you should trust your neighbor. You should trust everyone. So making a film about the desperation of people felt very on-point. This is about people having to fight to stay alive. Crossing moral lines to stay alive. Earl is very noble. He is a good parent to these children that are not his own and a loving partner to this woman who has an intense issue. But morally he crosses over the line sometimes. He's a fighting man. He believes that you get what you fight for."

Jamie Bell plays a great fighter onscreen, even though he isn't a fan of fight scenes. IFC

Bell admits this was the most he has ever controlled "the authorship of a character." So much so that while filming his first fight scene with Grillo, Bell realized that most of the dialogue written wasn't necessary.

"Violence is all he knows how to do. He's not a wordsmith. He's not someone who can pontificate and talk his way through things. He's a man of violence and a man of action. So we just cut two pages of dialogue and got down to it."

Bell also decided that extensive training wasn't right for Earl, whom he compares to a feral animal and sees as someone who knows how to throw a punch but is willing to do anything to win. Despite all of this preparation, though, come production there was one major hurdle that Bell had to overcome in order to play the pugilist.

"I loathe fight scenes. I genuinely dislike filming them," he admits. "They're exhausting. Physically, I don't like to do them. Also, it doesn't feel like a challenge. It doesn't feel like an acting challenge to me. It feels like we have to do that and then go back to the acting stuff.

"I know the two go hand in hand. The physicality of the character says a lot about who he is as a man and his experience and that's important. But I didn't do this movie to do a bunch of fight scenes. I did it because I thought it was an interesting portrait of being a desperate parent and the measures you'll go to to protect your family."

"Donnybrook" is now in select theaters.

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Stephen Merchant enters the ring with 'Fighting with My Family'

"The Office" co-creator talks directing the new biopic of WWE star Paige.

MATT JUUL
matthew.juul@metro.us

While Stephen Merchant wasn't a big wrestling fan growing up across the pond, the actor and director was instantly captivated by the story of Saraya Bevis, a.k.a. WWE icon Paige. When Merchant's pal Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson came to him with the idea of doing a biopic of her, Merchant jumped at the chance to direct "Fighting with My Family."

The film stars Florence Pugh as Paige and follows the wrestler's journey from obscurity in the U.K.'s scene to landing the job of a lifetime with the WWE.

Lena Headey, Florence Pugh and Nick Frost.

While Paige is certainly the focus of the film, her wrestling-obsessed family is also a delightful highlight, played by "Game of Thrones" star Lena Headey and "Shaun of the Dead" actor Nick Frost. Een "The Rock" gets in on the action, playing himself. We chatted with Merchant about the film and more.

Considering everything going on in the world, why do you feel it's so important to celebrate Paige's story?

I think it's taken on greater significance since we began the project. When we began, whatever it was, three years ago, that whole kind of Divas Revolution was just blossoming, again something that I had to catch up on. For me, it's not just about celebrating the empowerment of her as a woman but also as a working-class woman, certainly from the U.K. perspective, an uncelebrated working-class woman. It's interesting because in the U.K., there is a snobbery towards what she does. She's not being written about in the mainstream media and the broadsheets, and celebrated. It's funny because newspapers like The Guardian are always searching around for British women to celebrate the success of, and rightly so when they find a Claire Foy or whoever, and they rightly deserve the success and attention that they get. But it's interesting that there's this other corner of entertainment that's not really being looked at. So that was important to me and exciting to me.

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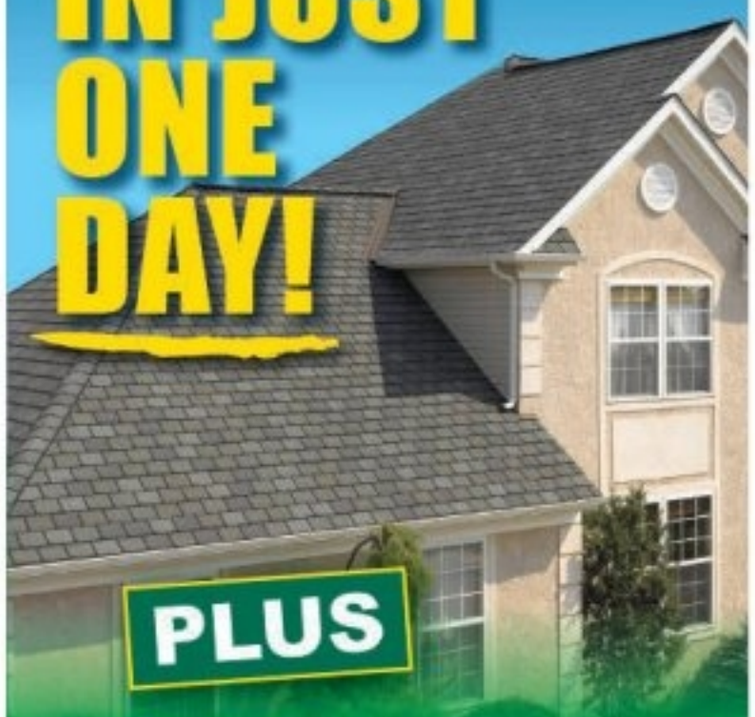

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"Fighting with My Family" is now in select theaters and opens nationwide Feb. 22. ALL PHOTOS ROBERT VIGLASKY / METRO GOLDWYN MAYER PICTURES

What made Florence such a perfect Paige?
It was very tough to find someone because I had in my head the real Paige, and at some point my casting director said, "Well look, I don't think we're going to find someone who's exactly like Paige, she's kind of unique. Let's find someone who will do their own interpretation of who she is." So we needed someone who was willing to do the wrestling and train to do that, who had the acting ability to carry the movie, and have the charisma that you believe that she could become a superstar. Paige if nothing else is very charismatic and compelling. I saw maybe 60 young actresses either on tape or in person. Florence, in the end, she came back multiple times, auditioned with me, auditioned with Jack [Lowden], who played her brother.

In the end, she just won the day. I was just so impressed by her. I mean the fourth day of shooting was that big WWE Monday Night Raw match, which we shot at the Staples Center in L.A. She had to come out after like a month of training and recreate that match. She said at one point — she was lying on the mat and saw one 8-year-old boy screaming, "You suck!" And the real Paige was saying, "Well, that's pretty much what it's like when you're a wrestler."

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JANUARY 4, 2019
INTEGREVIEW

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recruitment@biotrial.com
Or
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The cast of "Fighting with My Family" with writer/director Stephen Merchant. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Nick Frost lived out his childhood dream with 'Fighting with My Family'

The British comedian talks training as a wrestler and powerbombing Simon Pegg.

GREGORY WAKEMAN
Gregory.Wakeman@metro.us

"Fighting with My Family" tells the true story of how Paige went from the obscurity of amateur wrestling in eastern England to one of the most acclaimed stars of the WWE.

Written and directed by "The Office" 's Stephen Merchant, "Fighting with My Family" is as hilarious as expected, while also being surprisingly heartfelt. Having already seen the English documentary that the film is based on, Nick Frost, who plays the father to Florence Pugh's Paige, knew that Merchant could work wonders with the material.

But he also saw it as an opportunity to live out a childhood dream and become a wrestler, too.

"I was a big wrestling

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2125 Nelson Gilles, Household Goods, Furniture • 2214 Connie Johnson, Household Goods, Furniture • 2216 Micah Wilbur, Household Goods, Boxes • 2301 Kathleen Tucker, Household Goods, Boxes
2309 Rhonda Manson, Household Goods • 2326 Princess Bailey, Household Goods • 2329 Aaron Owens, Household Goods • 2404 Malik Wilcox, Boxes, Totes • 2418 Dwayne Turner, Household Goods
2417 Kenya Crosdale, Household Goods, Furniture • 2418 Charles Hagood JR, Household Goods, Furniture • 3014 Juneon Stokes, Household Goods • 2120 Dawn Taylor, Household Goods, Furniture
3124 Tanya Ross, Household Goods • 3208 Shelby Young, Household Goods • 3215 Shamone Simpson, Household Goods, Furniture • 3234 Trina Kinard, Household Goods
3402 Marcell Walker, Household Goods • 3420 Lexus Brooks, Household Goods, Furniture • 2501 Shamone Simpson, Household Goods • 2310 Teresa Greene-Cummings, Household Goods, Furniture

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1300 Terrie Hudson-Turpin, Household Goods, Furniture, Boxes, Toys, Appliances, Tools • 1409 Chris Kerns, Boxes • 1400 Chris Kerns, Boxes
1406 Richard Ward, Household Goods, Furniture, Boxes • 1412 Vanessa Blakely, Household Goods, Furniture, Boxes, Sporting Goods
2103 Michael Bernstein, Household, Furniture, Boxes, Suitcases, Appliances, Sporting Goods, Tools, Toys
2119 Joe Stephenson, Household, Furniture, Boxes • 2136 Sarah Murray, Household Goods, Furniture, Boxes, Suitcases • 2213 Nicole Willits, Furniture, Boxes
2227 Eileen Eckert, Household, Furniture, Boxes, Trunks, Toys • 2711 Anthony Boylock, Household Goods, Furniture, Appliances

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Extra Space Storage will hold a public auction to sell the contents of leased spaces to satisfy Extra Space's lien at the location indicated: **1240 Chester Pike Crum Lynne, PA 19022, February 25th 2019** at **11:15am**

Unit 3050-Krysta Burkholder-household items, Unit 3061-Malcolm Flamer-household items, Unit 104-Victor Lewis-El-household items, Unit 3053-Amy Doyle-household items, Unit 3216-Jasmine Smith-household items, Unit 3217-Morris Burton-daybed, chairs, Unit 3019-DJuana Queen-household items, Unit 1147-Sonya Sullivan-household items, Unit 2128-Sinqweta Fambro-household items

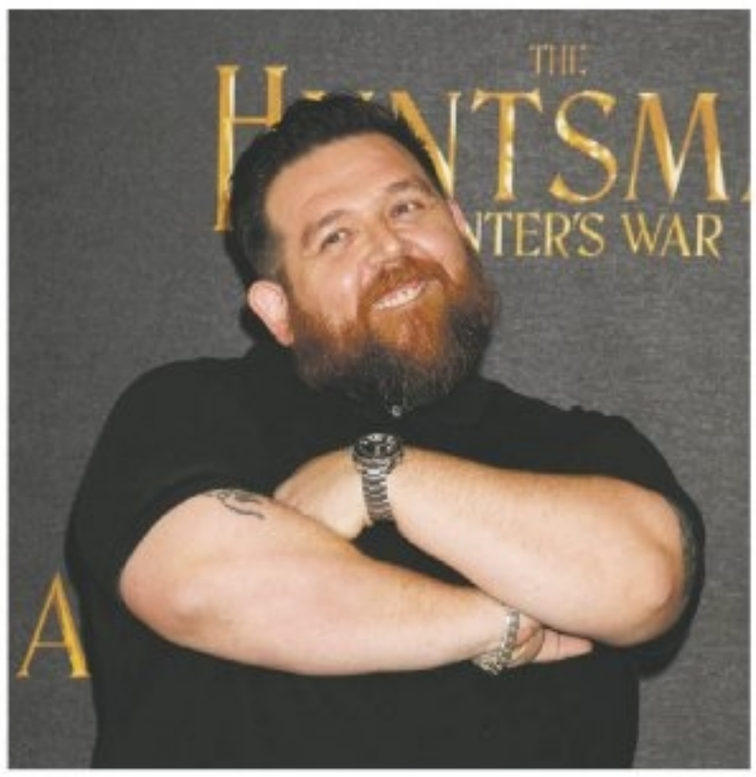
Purchases must be made with cash only and paid at the above referenced facility in order to complete the transaction. Extra Space Storage may refuse any bid and may rescind any purchase up until the winning bidder takes possession of the personal property.

fan. Ever since I was a kid. 'The Wide World Of Sports with Dicky Davies,' 'Giant Haystacks' and 'Big Daddy,'" he tells Metro. "We actually trained for two weeks for this to become a proper wrestler. It actually made me realize the similarity between acting and performing.

"If you trust the person you are there with, you can perhaps leave a little bit of yourself there, physically and emotionally. There are little hints and tips to tell that person what you are going to do next. It is a performance, you are not there to actually kill each other. That is what UFC is for."

Frost doesn't have time for people who dismiss wrestling because it isn't real. "It is allowed to not be real," he declares. "The bit that isn't real is the larger-than-life characters. But the bits that are real are the fact that people are incredible athletes, and without thinking they will put their bodies on the line to entertain mere mortals like us."

This wasn't the first time that Frost had



partaken in wrestling, though. The "Spaced" and "Hot Fuzz" star admits that he and his frequent collaborator Simon Pegg had a period where they "were doing a lot of backyard wrestling." One drunken wrestle saw Frost powerbomb Pegg through his bed, shattering it instantly.

"As I stood back up, Simon pointed out that my thumb was hanging off," adds Frost. "I relocated it twice and it kept on rolling out of the socket. So I taped it back into position. I always loved that feeling of having a good wrestle."

But while wrestling obviously plays a key part in "Fighting with My Family," Frost is keen to stress that at its core it "is a family film. A great family film. It just happens to have wrestling in it. That shouldn't put anyone off. If you have a family that you can laugh with and have rows with and are noisy with, then you'll love it."

And while Frost only actually met Paige when "Fighting with My Family" premiered at the Sundance Film Festival, he is clearly enamored with her and the incredible journey that she and her family have gone through.

"She is so lovely, passionate and funny and completely normal. She has — they all have — worked so hard. They have had a tough life. Seeing them succeed, it makes me happy. It is an utterly thankless task running something like the WAW in East Anglia.

"That is how British wrestling began, really. Wrestling for hardly any money, knocking down the ring themselves, putting it back up, traveling around, that is all passion. There was not much money. Ricky and Julia and the kids do it because they love wrestling."

"Fighting with My Family" is now in theaters.

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Time: 3:00 p.m.
Where: Philadelphia Housing Authority
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Wastin' away again in Phila-ritaville

National Margarita Day is Feb. 22.

MOLLY GIVEN
Molly.Given@metro.us

Cut up some limes, buy some chips and guac and get ready to fiesta because National Margarita Day is almost here. To celebrate the delicious holiday, some top Philly spots are offering specials and appetizing deals to make Feb. 22 truly feel like a party. Here is where to go for National Margarita Day in Philly.

Revolution Taco's margarita mixer. AVERSA PR

Al Pastor

This Exton hot spot was named home of the "Best Margarita on the Main Line" by Main Line Today, so it's a no-brainer that this eatery would be a top spot to stop by on National Margarita Day. For the refreshing holiday, Al Pastor is serving up some of its extra-special margaritas including the Millionaire's Margarita (Gran Patron, Grand Marnier and lime juice, $25), Patron Flight (Patron Silver, Patron Roca Silver and Patron Platinum, $22) and its Patron Anejo Margaritas (traditional with Patron Anejo, $18).
560 Wellington Sq., Exton, eatalpastor.com

Adobe Café

On Feb. 22 Adobe Café is serving up its $5 House Margaritas and $6 Watermelon Margaritas made with Sauza Blue, watermelon liqueur and a fresh fruit puree. Both refreshing margarita options can be enjoyed on the rocks or frozen. This Passyunk spot is the perfect spot to enjoy National Margarita Day.
1919 E. Passyunk Ave., ordertheadobecafe.com

Cafe Ynez

This hot spot authentic Mexican eatery in Point Breeze may be BYOB, but they do it in style, especially for National Margarita Day. Philadelphians can stop into Cafe Ynez on Feb. 22 to indulge in carafes of house-made margarita mixers, such as the jalapeno cucumber mixer for $15, and authentic Mexico City fare from Chef JC Piña all day long.
2025 Washington Ave., cafeynez.com

Revolution Taco

Revolution Taco is known for serving up delicious and indulgent tacos, empanadas, burritos and burrito bowls. For National Margarita Day it is kicking its already tasty menu up a notch by adding freshly-made coconut lime spicy jalapeno margarita mixers for only $4. Philadelphians can bring their favorite tequila and party it up at Revolution Taco without breaking the bank. This Center City spot is also serving up a special citrus margarita marinated grilled shrimp taco (two for $10 or three for $14) as well.
2015 Walnut St., therevolutiontaco.com

Stove & Tap

Head to Stove & Tap on Feb. 22 to party at its Devils vs. Angels Mardi Gras pregame. There will be plenty of beads, masks and Mardi Gras fun going on that will make guests feel like they have stepped right onto Bourbon Street. Trios of Devil's Sneaky Heat and Angel's Sweet Heat tacos will be paired with Devil vs. Angel margaritas all night long. The Devil's Shoulder Margarita includes tequila blanco, fresh ginger, blood orange puree, fresh lime, a nip of fresno pepper, orange zest and a sugar rim while the Angel's Wings Margarita features tequila blanco, fresh ginger syrup, fresh orange, fresh lime, agave nectar and an orange-lime sugared twist.
329 W. Main St., Lansdale, stoveandtap.com

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Rebel Taco's margaritas and Co-Op's margarita. PUNCH MEDIA

Co-Op

This West Philadelphia eatery will be celebrating the fiesta-filled holiday with its house-made margarita served with Casamigos tequila, fresh lime juice, triple sec and a splash of pineapple juice. The delicious margarita will be available for $14 all day and guests can also pair their margarita with one of Chef Paulie Silva's authentic tacos. *20 S. 33rd St., coopphilly.com*

Bing Bing Dim Sum

Bing Bing Dim Sum may not be the first spot that comes to mind when you think of National Margarita Day, but this Passyunk spot will surprise you. Philadelphians who head to Bing Bing Dim Sum on Feb. 22 can order up the "I Need a Margarita," which features Cimarron reposada, cranberry-infused orange liqueur and ginger lime. *1648 E. Passyunk Ave., bingbingdimsum.com*

Las Bugambilias

Las Bugambilias is South Street's best-kept secret, especially on National Margarita Day. This authentic Mexican hotspot will be celebrating the tequila-filled holiday with delicious margarita options such as traditional, blood orange and spicy. Las Bugambilias will also feature traditional Mexican favorites such as agua de Horchata and agua de Jamaica on Feb. 22. *148 South St., lasbugambiliasphilly.com*

Rebel Taco

The Bourse Food Hall is home to the delicious hot spot Rebel Taco. Rebel will be serving up its classic and frozen margaritas for only $4 all day on Feb. 22. Philadelphians can indulge in classic or spicy (made with jalapeno-infused water) margs and authentic Mexican fare to truly celebrate National Margarita Day in the most delicious way possible. *111 S. Independence Mall E., theboursephilly.com*

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Property contained in the following units located at 3503 B Street will be sold via online auction at STORAGETREASURES.COM on February 25, 2019 at 11:00 AM., to the highest bidder to satisfy the owners lien for rent under 73 p.s. 1901 et. seq. Auction is with reserve, 21st Century Storage reserves the right to set the minimum bids and refuse bids. Cash or credit card ONLY. Contents must be paid for 2/25 and removed within 48 hours.

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Shanay Reid D325
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Walter Allen Barnett F508
Ernestina C Lejarza F538
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Early Pennsylvania sports betting numbers released

The statewide handle in January was $32 million.

MATT BURKE

Matt Burke is a veteran sports journalist and the Founder and Editor in Chief of MetroBet.

GETTY IMAGES

The Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board announced its January sports betting numbers this past weekend and the results were mighty encouraging.

The statewide handle (total amount of all wagers) was $32 million, generating $2.6 million in revenue. SugarHouse Casino had the best performance in terms of handle as it captured $10.7 million. Here is the full list based on handle:

SugarHouse
$10.7 million

Rivers Casino
$9.5 million

Parx Casino
$5.3 million

Hollywood Casino at Penn National Race Course
$4.8 million

Parx South Philadelphia Turf Club $858,130

Harrah's Philadelphia
$615,704

It should be noted that the Parx locations as well as Harrah's are only partial-month returns as those locations did not start operating until around mid-January.

Not surprisingly, these numbers were over double that of the month of December, when only a couple of locations in the state offered wagering. The sportsbooks were also boosted in January by the Philadelphia Eagles' run in the NFL playoffs.

By comparison, the state of New Jersey fared a bit better in its first full month of sports betting operations as its handle in July 2018 was $40.6 million. At the time, New Jersey had five properties accepting bets.

The elephant in the room here for Pennsylvania is that it does not yet accept online sports betting, which is where the brunt of New Jersey's business comes from. In its first full month of online and retail sports betting in September of last year, the handle for New Jersey was a whopping $184 million, $104 million of which was mobile.

Pennsylvania is expected to have legal online sports betting up and running sometime this spring.

TWEET OF THE DAY

Warren Sharp
@SharpFootball

On the subject of Elway & his infatuation with tall QBs:

Imagine if Jerome Bettis had been a NFL GM and used 1st round draft picks on Ron Dayne & T.J. Duckett and then traded for Eddie Lacy?

GETTY IMAGES

Sports betting 101: The magic of **parlays**

VSiN

Six-team parlays on point spreads or Over/Unders pay anywhere from 40/1 to 45/1 depending on where you're betting them.

Betting moneylines in parlays can change the payouts dramatically in one direction or another. A six-team parlay using favorites at -200 on the moneyline (about a five-point favorite in point spread terms) would only return 10/1. A six-team parlay using +200 underdogs (around +6 in point spread terms) would return more than 700/1.

These dynamics are important to think about in the month of February because pundits and casual bettors start talking about futures prices to win the NCAA Tournament. Some high-profile teams look like they offer value at 15/1 or 20/1. It's easy to spot sleepers at 50/1 where you're thinking, "Hey, they're better than THAT!" And, there's always somebody down around 200/1 or 300/1 that has some talent and could get hot and catch a few breaks.

Picking a team to win the National Championship is basically asking them to win a six-team moneyline parlay for you. Your team gets parlayed with itself round by round. Two games the first weekend, two games the next weekend through the Sweet 16 and Elite 8, and then the national semifinals and finals. Most invitees have to go 6-0, though the relative handful stuck in "play-in" games have to win seven times (which hasn't happened yet, and may not, ever).

You can simulate the power of a parlay by backing your selected team to win outright each round (which is what they HAVE to do to win the national title). After each game, fully re-invest your initial stake and profit. Keep rolling it over, game by game. If your choice DOES go 6-0, you'll be grateful you bet it this way rather than on the futures board. If it doesn't, you lose the same initial stake. **JEFF FOGLE**

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Look to the East for NBA futures

There is strong value in the Eastern Conference title race.

Part of the reason the NFL playoffs are so heavily bet on is that pro football these days has so much parity. Sure, the Patriots keep landing in the Super Bowl. But there is a new NFC champion crowned basically every year and it's no sure thing that the Pats are actually going to seal the deal in the Big Game.

The NBA is not nearly as fun on the surface, as it's basically been a lock since the day Kevin Durant arrived in the Bay Area that the Golden State Warriors are going to win it all each June. The odds for the Warriors to win the title right now are an obscene -275 with the No. 2 team, the Toronto Raptors, owning 8/1 odds.

Even if Durant or Steph Curry go down with a season-ending injury between now and mid-June, you can bet that the Dubs will still be favorites to hoist the Larry O'Brien Trophy.

Sure, you could put a flier on the Sixers to win it all at 15/1. But even the biggest homer would have to admit that beating the Warriors four times out of seven games is a task taller than Joel Embiid on stilts.

So what should bettors do about this NBA conundrum?

The answer is to avoid championship futures altogether, and instead look at conference championship odds.

The Eastern Conference is entirely wide open, and offers great mystery and great odds. Here are the odds for the top five teams in the East.

Raptors EVEN
Bucks +200
Celtics 7/2
76ers 5/1
Pacers 100/1

A final four in the East of the Raptors, Bucks, Celtics and Sixers seems like a lock, with any of the four teams being able to take down another one. A good play here would be to hedge and pick two of the four to represent the East in the Finals. I'd take the Sixers and Celtics at those odds.

The Raptors look like world-beaters right now but there is legit concern that they're peaking too soon — something that often happens in the NBA.

Marc Gasol was brought in as another body to match up with Joel Embiid but it's unlikely that the 34-year-old will be able to keep up with Embiid when he's out on the perimeter. Embiid has had great success against Toronto this season as he has a pair of 30-plus point games against them in 2018-19.

The Celtics also have an excellent chance at finally living up to their preseason hype as they have not only shown that they have the Sixers' number but that they can also dispose of the Bucks. Boston beat Giannis Antetokounmpo and the Bucks in the first round of last year's playoffs without the services of Kyrie Irving and Gordon Hayward. **MATT BURKE**

GETTY IMAGES

Sports on TV Highlights

7:00 pm	**NHL Hockey** Tampa Bay Lightning vs. Philadelphia Flyers	NBC Sports Philadelphia
7:00 pm	**Men's CBB** Vanderbilt Commodores vs. Tennessee Volunteers	ESPN
8:00 pm	**NHL Hockey** Toronto Maple Leafs vs. St. Louis Blues	NBC Sports Network
8:00 pm	**Men's CBB** Maryland Terrapins vs. Iowa Hawkeyes	BTN Big Ten Network
8:30 pm	**NHL Hockey** Nashville Predators vs. Dallas Stars	ESPN+
9:00 pm	**Men's CBB** Kentucky Wildcats vs. Missouri Tigers	ESPN

Flyers–Lightning betting preview

The Lightning and Flyers meet for the third time this season, and both contests earlier this year were highly memorable. Both tilts went to overtime knotted up at five goals apiece, with Tampa finding the game-winners in the three-on-three window.

Those two affairs built on a noticeable trend, as the Over has now cashed in seven straight matchups between these two teams. Goaltending has improved on both clubs in recent games, but considering how the Lightning and Flyers can pile on goals at times, the Over looks like the best bet of the evening.

Tampa Bay is the class of the NHL when it comes to offense, as it registers a league-leading 3.86 goals per game. Philly is just 17th for the season at 2.95 goals per game, but since the Flyers embarked on that eight-game winning streak on Jan. 14, their scorers are averaging 3.84 goals per tilt. Both power plays have been on-point, too, with the Lightning striking on seven of their last 17 opportunities (41.2 percent), while the Flyers are five for their last 15 (33.3 percent).

Right winger Nikita Kucherov, still the NHL leader in points, has been his usual brilliant self for Tampa Bay, notching 13 points in his last four contests. Philly right winger Jakub Voracek has been among his club's most consistent forwards of late, as he has posted a point in eight of his last nine games.

The play: Lightning -140, Lightning vs. Flyers Over

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RANKING THE TOP PHILLY ATHLETES

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Who has the highest upside among young athletes in Philadelphia? Put it this way: Who are the players who'll provide the most value between now and the end of their careers?

Here's my take. I made the upper-end cutoff here age 26 — about the time most athletes enter their prime. And I only chose varsity players, so prospects like the Phillies' Adonis Medina or Flyers' Morgan Frost don't qualify.

A year ago, I'd have included Shayne Gostisbehere and saved a spot for Scott Kingery. Two years ago, I slotted in Markelle Fultz. Ugh. So you see, this is not an exact science.

10. Tobias Harris, Sixers, 26 – This is speculative since the sharpshooter hasn't finished unpacking his bags. But I'm betting Brett Brown devises a way to fit this versatile player into the offense, and that the soon-to-be free agent is swayed and paid enough to stay here for years.

9. Dallas Goedert, Eagles, 24 – Count on Zach Ertz snagging 80-plus receptions over the next few seasons. But also count on Goedert's production increasing and the South Dakota kid becoming an elite tight end for a decade.

Flyers goaltender Carter Hart could be the face of the future between the pipes. GETTY IMAGES

8. Seranthony Dominguez, Phillies, 23 – The Dominican righty looked like Pedro Martinez when he arrived last May, allowing just two hits, no walks and no runs through his first 14.2 innings. Then, reality and fatigue set

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OF THE FUTURE

in and he got smacked around. He'll be older, smarter and surrounded by better teammates. He offers a decade of great bullpen work.

7. Ivan Provorov, Flyers, 22 – It hasn't been a straight line up, as the Russian-born defenseman's slumps and stumbles parallel the franchise's ineptitude in recent seasons. But the talent is there. The last month, at least, looks like redemption time for Provorov and his teammates.

6. Rhys Hoskins, Phillies, 25 – His power numbers over his first season-and-a-half project to full-year averages of 41 homers and 115 RBIs. Those numbers would make him the best slugger around here since Ryan Howard. He'll be better with the move to first base and protected by a stronger lineup around him.

5. Ben Simmons, Sixers, 22 – An incendiary talent who can pass, drive, rebound and fill up a box score. What he can't (or won't) do so far is launch a jump shot. When that comes around, the young All-Star will find himself among the NBA's elite players.

4. Carter Hart, Flyers, 20 – Too soon, you think? Maybe. But Hart has been an elite prospect since age 12 and his NHL arrival has been spectacular. He's fundamentally solid, poised, and fast on his feet and with his glove. He's the goalie Flyers fans have waited to come along for 30 years.

3. Aaron Nola, Phillies, 25 – What a great breakout season he had in '18, leading MLB pitchers in WAR (10.5) and going 17-6 with 224 strikeouts and a 2.37 ERA. A smart, fundamentally sound pitcher who would have fit right in with the Phils' great rotations of a decade earlier.

2. Carson Wentz, Eagles, 26 – Don't stop believing. Injuries limited Wentz's mobility and ended his season early, but the kid still has the stuff to be a franchise quarterback. I've always foreseen a Roethlisberger-type Hall of Fame career with a few Super Bowl trophies of his own.

1. Joel Embiid, Sixers, 24 – The Alpha Dog. A top five NBA player now who keeps getting better. A great teammate, fun personality and motivated winner. With the injury worries behind him (knock on wood), Embiid will go on to win MVPs and be a Hall of Famer. I don't think I'd trade him for anyone in sports.

That's my list. Who's on yours?

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FAMILY COURT FOR THE STATE OF DELAWARE

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Petition# 19-03071

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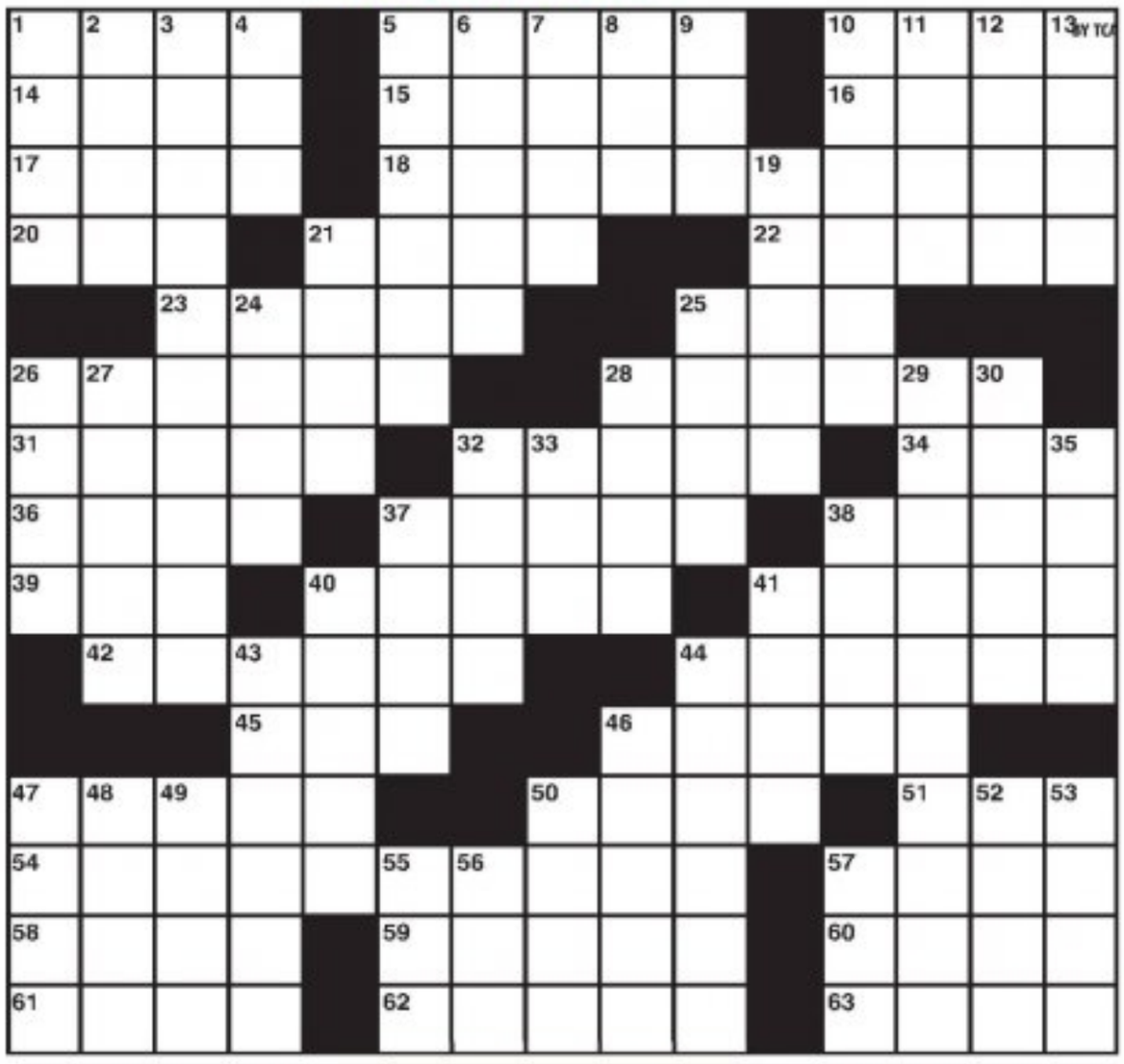

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ACROSS

1 Jack or joker
5 Flock members
10 Read quickly
14 Above
15 Actor Romero
16 Long sandwich
17 Mrs. Herman Munster
18 Stands for
20 Presidential monogram
21 Neat
22 Pushover
23 Accepted standards
25 Spoil; deface
26 Short sleep
28 __ City, Nevada
31 Narrow street
32 Piece of garlic
34 High chair accessory
36 Untruths
37 Merchandise
38 Get away
39 Scale divisions: abbr.
40 Sphere of the world
41 Breakfast drink
42 Has __; is troubled
44 Empty-stomach feeling
45 Go quickly
46 Henry or Peter
47 Christmas song
50 Gap
51 "Rub-a-dub-dub, three men in a __..."
54 Honest
57 Bean curd
58 Gershwin's "Rhapsody in __"
59 Tiny weight
60 Steel's main component
61 __ up; arranges
62 Decree
63 Abnormal sac

DOWN

1 Respiratory ailment
2 Zealous
3 Unstoppable; determined
4 Parched
5 Pinch pennies
6 Pays attention to
7 Notice
8 Cochlea's place
9 Prefix for view or heat
10 Large scissors
11 Penny
12 Carney & others
13 Too inquisitive
19 Trunk tire
21 Cafeteria patron's item
24 Change for a five
25 Dallas team, for short
26 Summon
27 Excuse
28 Secret language
29 Required
30 Family tree member
32 Pigeon sounds
33 Bowl clumsily
35 Bar order
37 Delight
38 Provide money for
40 Slyness; cunning
41 Beaver Cleaver's mom
43 Pushes roughly
44 Word attached to share or candle
46 Compel
47 Hired vehicles
48 Competent
49 Disastrous defeat
50 __ over; deliver
52 Eerie sightings, for short
53 Tap a baseball
55 Startling word
56 "__ Father, Who art in heaven..."
57 __-tac-toe

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- Healthy Volunteers
- Kidney Disease
- Lactose Intolerance
- Liver Disease
- Migraine
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